Files reveal tip on alleged JFK plot

The Secret Service was told of an assassination plan, papers showed. Data backed an ex-officer's claim.

By Richard Cole
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Secret Service was told of a possible plot to shoot President John. F. Kennedy from an office building with a rifle at least a week before his assassination in Dallas, files released by the Miami Police Department confirm.

The right-wing organizer who revealed the alleged plot also told a police informant the day after the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination that Lee Harvey Oswald would never talk about it.

The day after that interview, Nov. 24, Oswald was shot and killed by Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas police department.

The Miami police files confirm and add to an account by a retired police intelligence officer, Lt. Everett Kay, who said three years ago that he learned of an assassination plot from informant William Somersett. The FBI and Secret Service would not comment at the time.

A newly released Nov. 15, 1963, memo from Miami Detective S.J. Hebert shows the Secret Service was aware of the alleged plot before the assassination.

"Agent Jamison of the Secret Service called to state that he had been requested to contact a William Somersett with reference to information given to the FBI by Somersett, and relayed to the Secret Service," the memo says.

Three days later, Kennedy visited Miami — where his motorcade was canceled — before flying on to Texas. He was shot in Dallas 31 years ago yesterday, and authorities accused Oswald of firing a high-powered rifle from the Texas Book Depository.

Secret Service spokesman Jaime Cagigas in Washington said Monday that he would check on the Miami report, but was not familiar with it.

Somersett, who reported on activities of white supremacy groups, secretly taped a conversation with Joseph Milteer, a wealthy member of the White Citizens Council in Georgia.

During a meeting in Miami on Nov. 5, 1963, Milteer said Kennedy was a "marked man," according to the police transcript.

When Somersett asked how an assassination would be done, the transcript says Milteer replied: "From an office building ... with a high-powered rifle."

Although Kay says he rushed the tape to the FBI, the information was never disclosed in the Warren Commission Report on the assassination. There is no indication that Milteer was interrogated until five days after the assassination. He professed no knowledge of the plot, the Miami police files say.

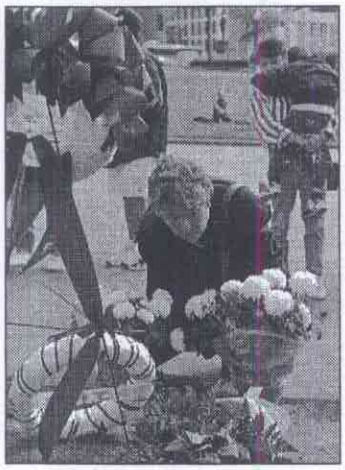
Neither Milteer nor Somersett was ever called by the Warren Commission. Both are now dead.

Federal authorities and congressional investigators reviewed the tape in the 1960s and 1970s, but never reported finding any link with the Kennedy assassination.

According to the police files, Somersett and Milteer met in Jacksonville, Fla., the day after the assassination, when Oswald was being held by Dallas police.

Milteer would not tell Somersett how he knew of a plot beforehand, but said that there was "a lot of money" involved and that Oswald would not disclose anything, Somersett related.

Somersett said Milteer had indicated that "ground work was being set, maybe, in five to six different states to kill the president."



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Basilisa Muniz places flowers at the site of the John F. Kennedy slaying in Dallas. Yesterday was the 31st anniversary of his death.